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Assistance in mine action

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Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/159 of 16 December 2002. It focuses on progress achieved in implementing the six strategic goals and related objectives enumerated in the United Nations mine-action strategy for the period 2001-2005 (A/56/448/Add.1).

Progress has been achieved in the following areas:

(a) *Increased information and improved information technology*. Production of information related to mine-action problems; inter-agency assessment missions to mine-affected countries; and enhancement of the web-based information network E-Mine; availability of Information Management System for Mine Action version 3.0 in several mine-affected countries (strategic goal one);

(b) *Improved capacity to respond to emergencies*. Endorsement of the operational framework for rapid response; implementation of a rapid-response plan in Iraq; and provision of emergency mine-action assistance to seven countries (strategic goal two);

(c) *Sustained efforts to build national mine-action capacity*. Efforts to build national and local mine-action capacity in over 30 countries (strategic goal three);

(d) *Significant improvements in quality management*. Strengthened management and oversight of the International Mine Action Standards (strategic goal four);

* A/58/150.

** The need to request and incorporate input from a variety of entities within and outside the United Nations system delayed the finalization of the present report. With regard to future submissions, steps will be taken to ensure that delays are minimized.

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(e) *Successful resource mobilization*. Significantly increased resources made available for mine-action programmes; *Portfolio of Mine-related Projects: 2003* issued to coincide with the launch of consolidated appeals (strategic goal five);

(f) *Increased advocacy in support of relevant legal instruments*. Expert information provided to Member States considering legislation to regulate explosive remnants of war and contributed to efforts of Member States to codify the rights of persons living with disabilities, including landmine survivors (strategic goal six).

The report recommends specific action to enhance the quality of mine-action work by the United Nations.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 57/159 of 16 December 2002, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-eighth session a report on the progress achieved on all relevant issues outlined both in his previous reports to the Assembly on assistance in mine clearance and mine action and in the resolution, including the progress made by the International Committee of the Red Cross and other international and regional organizations as well as national programmes, and on the operation of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action and other mine-action programmes.

II. Action taken in accordance with paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 57/159

2. In paragraph 12 of its resolution 57/159, the General Assembly noted with appreciation the implementation of the United Nations mine-action strategy for the period 2001-2005 (A/56/448/Add.1), and requested the Secretary-General to review it formally by further seeking and taking into account the views of Member States and taking into consideration the impact of the landmine problem on rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, in order to ensure the effectiveness of assistance in mine action by the United Nations.

3. In response to that request, a comprehensive review of the strategy has been completed. An addendum to the present report describes the review process and contains the text of the revised strategy (A/58/260/Add.1).

III. Progress achieved in the implementation of the United Nations mine-action strategy for the period 2001-2005

4. This section describes progress achieved in the implementation of each of the six strategic goals of the United Nations mine-action strategy for the period 2001-2005 during the period under review.

Strategic goal one. Information is produced and made available to all to understand and address mine-action problems.

5. Inter-agency and multisectoral assessment missions were organized to Mauritania and Tunisia to determine the scope and nature of their landmine and unexploded ordnance (UXO) problems. The missions identified constraints to and opportunities for mine-action initiatives and made recommendations for a comprehensive response. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) took part in a mission to assess the mine situation in Colombia. Following a subsequent request from the Government of Colombia, UNDP is establishing a mine-action capacity-building programme; UNICEF already supports mine-risk education there (objective 1.1).

6. Accessed through the Internet at www.mineaction.org, E-Mine, the electronic mine information network, added more than 800 items in 2002, for a total of 1,700 documents and profiles of mine-action organizations. All project profiles in the *Portfolio of Mine-related Projects: 2003* are available through the site. E-Mine now also offers access to a database on countries' progress in destroying stockpiles of mines. Since August 2002, E-Mine has had 160,000 distinct users, who each visited an average of 14 documents before leaving the site (objective 1.2).

7. UNMAS contracted the Mine Action Information Center of James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA, United States of America, to carry out a pilot project aimed at using E-Mine to provide selected reports from national programmes to the general public and mine-action practitioners. The project relies on a standardized reporting template developed as part of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). Installations and upgrades of IMSMA version 3.0 are now being completed by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) in Afghanistan, Albania, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Serbia and Montenegro (Kosovo) (objective 1.4).

8. Support for research and development of technology for detection, removal and destruction of mines and UXO continued. Activities included two studies undertaken in cooperation with GICHD, one assessing the use of mine-detection dogs in marking and clearance operations, the other involving research into the application of mechanical mine- and UXO-clearance technology. Results will be used in the development of international standards and guidelines for the use of such equipment. (objectives 1.5 and 4.8).

Strategic goal two. Rapid response capability is in place to meet mine-action requirements in emergency situations.

9. The United Nations operational framework for rapid response was put to the test in early 2003 in Iraq. At the request of the United Nations Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, UNMAS deployed a mine-action coordination team, with the participation of UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the World Food Programme and a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). UNOPS also contracted and deployed operational teams for emergency survey, mine-detection dogs and disposal of explosive ordnance. Landmine and UXO safety briefings were provided to United Nations and other humanitarian personnel prior to their return to Iraq. As at 21 July 2003, donors had contributed over $11 million in 2003 for Iraq through the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action. (objective 2.1).

10. Under the rapid response plan, UNOPS made standby arrangements with four mine-action companies and NGOs to deploy emergency response teams at short notice (objective 2.1). In addition, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in its contingency-planning exercises, is increasingly taking into consideration existing and potential landmine threats. Those exercises include inter-agency country team members who can in turn incorporate landmine issues into their own agencies' contingency plans.

11. The Mine-Action Programme for Afghanistan, comprising 15 national and international NGOs coordinated by the United Nations Mine-Action Centre in Afghanistan, nearly doubled in size, to over 7,200 Afghan personnel, in response to

increased demand for mine action in support of humanitarian, development and reconstruction initiatives. Significant advances were made in quality management, including the revision of standard operating procedures and in information-gathering and analysis through the introduction of IMSMA. A landmine impact survey was begun in 2003 to better identify at-risk populations and enhance national priority-setting and resource allocation. In the 12 months ending 30 June 2003, over 30 square kilometres (sq km) of high-priority mine-affected areas and over 80 sq km of former battlefields were cleared, while over 115 sq km of affected areas were surveyed and mapped. Eighty per cent of all known cluster-bomb strike sites were cleared and the remainder surveyed. Mine-risk education activities reached an estimated 60 per cent of the Afghan population through radio, television and quick-impact programmes. Additional outreach sites were also established in the main refugee camp areas and at major crossing points and resettlement areas. Altogether, over 2.5 million people received safety messages during the period under review, compared with 900,000 the previous year.

12. The Government of Afghanistan has shown significant commitment to mine action, most notably through its accession to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Mine Ban Convention) in September 2002. According to a strategic medium-term plan, developed jointly by the United Nations and the Government and assuming consistent levels of international support, all high-priority areas will be cleared by 2008 and others by 2013. The Government has established a mine-action consultative group mechanism within the framework of the national development budget. All relevant ministries, key donors, the United Nations and implementing NGOs participated, providing a coordination body for future planning and priority-setting. As part of the strategic plan, UNDP is working with the Government to develop a detailed transition plan that will ensure an incremental transfer of responsibility for the coordination of mine action to appropriate government authorities.

13. The Mine-Action Coordination Centre in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been instrumental in the integration of mine-action concerns into the plans and operations of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), in particular for the eastern part of the country. MONUC contracted a commercial mine-clearance company to carry out technical surveys at Kisangani and Kindu airports and similar operations were conducted in Kisangani-La Forestière and Manono through UNOPS. Since June 2003, the United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre has been coordinating mine-clearance operations in Bunia. The Democratic Republic of the Congo became a State party to the Mine Ban Convention on 2 November 2002. The Centre has assisted the Government in complying with its obligations under the Convention, in particular in completing reports under article 7. The Centre also assisted the Rassemblement congolais pour la Démocratie (RCD-Goma) to destroy its stockpiles of mines in Kisangani.

14. UNMAS continued its programme, executed with UNOPS, in the temporary security zone between Eritrea and Ethiopia and adjacent areas, where the Mine-Action Coordination Centre in the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea has been responsible for coordinating mine-action activities. In response to a July 2002 presidential decree that led to the departure of international mine-action NGOs from Eritrea, the coordination centre refocused its mine-action services in support of

the peacekeeping mission. In a unique development, the mine-action assets of the peacekeeping force were fully integrated with the civilian components of the coordination centre. UNDP is helping develop the technical capacity of the Eritrean Demining Authority to coordinate and manage national mine-action efforts.

15. A significant UXO threat resulted from the brief but violent internal conflict of spring 2001 in some parts of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In cooperation with the national Mine-Action Centre, an UNMAS project, executed with UNOPS, coordinated the delivery of bilateral contributions enabling national authorities to deal with the problem. As at 30 April 2003, 4.7 sq km of land had been cleared, allowing three quarters of the affected villages to be returned to their former inhabitants. The United Nations programme closed at the end of June 2003, leaving a capable national Mine-Action Centre to deal with the residual mine and UXO problem.

16. The role of the Mine-Action Coordination Centre in Lebanon expanded in 2002 as a new Operation Emirates Solidarity project began mine-clearance operations, with funding from the United Arab Emirates. The United Nations, the Lebanese National Demining Office and the Government of the United Arab Emirates contributed staff and financial resources to create the Mine-Action Coordination Centre of Southern Lebanon. Under the project, the Centre contracted two commercial companies to work on tasks prioritized by the National Demining Office. UNOPS contracted a third company to carry out quality assurance. A technical survey, initiated in March 2002 by the NGO Mines Advisory Group, has been providing information that assists with prioritization. The Group is also carrying out a nationwide landmine impact survey, funded by the European Union. As at 11 July 2003, more than 4.2 sq km of land had been cleared and returned to communities and more than 36,000 mines had been destroyed. However, over 1,000 minefields remain along the border between Israel and Lebanon, outside the area covered by Operation Emirates Solidarity. Planning is under way to transfer full responsibility for mine action in southern Lebanon to the National Demining Office. As UNMAS phases out its support in southern Lebanon, UNDP is providing capacity-building support.

17. On 19 April 2003, the Government of the Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the United Nations Country Team agreed on a plan for an emergency mine-action programme to support the development of national standards for mine action, document the capacity of national mine-action NGOs and promote the development of a national mine-action body capable of planning and coordinating mine action following a peace agreement. Through UNOPS, UNMAS began implementing assessments and clearance operations in the Nuba Mountains and UNICEF conducted mine-risk education. Some 200,000 square metres have been cleared, resulting in over 16 sq km of suspected land being returned to pre-war use in the Nuba Mountains, enabling hand pumps and water wells to be established and facilitating the return of entire communities. UNICEF and UNMAS assisted the Government with the development of a mine-action strategy in support of the emergency mine-action programme. A tripartite memorandum of understanding was signed by the Government of the Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the United Nations on 19 September 2002. Accordingly, mine-action support is provided to the National Mine-Action Office and coordination offices in the Nuba Mountains and in Rumbek. UNDP is developing a capacity-building programme to support national and local efforts to address the mine problem.

18. In Angola, Burundi, Eritrea, Iraq, the Russian Federation (Chechnya) and the northern and southern Sudan, the UNICEF Office of Emergency Programmes deployed members of its "flying team" of experienced mine-action technical consultants to assist in identifying at-risk populations and developing and implementing mine-accident prevention strategies, especially in emergency situations.

19. During the period under review, members of the Survey Working Group, led by the NGO Survey Action Centre and comprising key mine-action NGOs and United Nations entities, developed a common format for gathering emergency assessment data on mine and UXO hazards. The format is being pilot tested in Iraq (objective 2.4).

Strategic goal three. National and local capacities are in place to plan, coordinate and implement mine-action programmes.

20. The primary responsibility for managing mine-action programmes in mine-affected countries lies with the national and local authorities. In many instances, countries call on the United Nations to help them manage their responses to mine and UXO contamination over the long term. Within the United Nations system, UNDP fulfils this critical role. UNDP field- and headquarters-based services assist national authorities in establishing institutional structures to address the mine threat in an integrated and practical way and to create an environment in which mine-action activities are conducted to greatest impact and efficiency. That support is often provided through UNOPS.

21. UNDP coordinates its global mine-action response in post-conflict environments through the Mine Action Team of its Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. In immediate post-conflict environments, long-term mine-action planning and national capacity-building must begin during the initial stages of emergency response. In countries with peacekeeping operations, such as Afghanistan, Eritrea and Lebanon, UNMAS is implementing emergency mine-action programmes with UNOPS and UNDP is developing national mine-action capacity to ensure an appropriate transfer to national management. In Angola, UNDP is providing technical assistance to the Inter-sectoral Commission on Demining and Humanitarian Assistance, the national coordinating body. UNDP recently established new capacity-building projects in Colombia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan and Tajikistan. In Sri Lanka, UNDP launched the main phase of its capacity-building project, providing technical support to the National Steering Committee for Mine Action and regional mine-action offices.

22. UNDP (in most cases working through UNOPS) helped to strengthen national management and coordination structures and policy-making bodies in Albania, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Lebanon and Somalia. In a number of UNDP-supported countries, the national mine-action programmes have achieved technical and managerial sustainability, though continued financial support is required. In Azerbaijan, UNDP supports the Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action to develop management capabilities, including quality assurance capacity and the requisite technical expertise to conduct technical survey and demining operations. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, specific achievements include the enactment of a national demining law; the establishment of a unified, national mine-action

centre; transforming the two entity mine-action centres into two regional offices; a commitment by the Government to support the mine-action programme directly by financing staff salaries; and the development of an eight-year national strategic plan that aims to render the country free from the effects of landmines by 2010. In Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, UNDP has been assisting with the development of national mine-action strategies that are linked to national development and reconstruction plans.

23. The National Demining Institute in Mozambique has taken the lead in coordinating a national response to the mine and UXO problem that is integrated into national development plans. UNDP is also working with the national authorities to transform the accelerated demining programme into a national entity. During the period under review, UNDP provided support to the Government of Ukraine to address its significant stockpile of anti-personnel landmines, including some 6 million PFM-type mines, which are too dangerous and environmentally harmful to destroy by normal methods. UNDP is also assisting the Government with the process of ratification of the Mine Ban Convention. In Yemen, UNDP continues, with the support of UNOPS, to help the Government clear all high-impact communities and address the medical and socio-economic reintegration needs of mine victims. More than 2.5 sq km of land have been released for productive use and 70 per cent of high-impact communities cleared of mines and UXO. UNDP plans to phase out its capacity-building project in Yemen over the next four years.

24. During the period under review, UNDP drafted initial guidelines for transition strategies for United Nations-supported mine-action programmes that support capacity-building efforts at the national and local levels. "Transition" in that context is defined as either the termination of or a substantial reduction in the size and scope of a capacity-building project led by international advisers. The final guidelines, to be issued in 2004, will be used throughout the life cycle of a mine-action capacity-building project (objective 3.2).

25. UNDP seeks to promote cooperation, networking and information sharing among mine-affected countries. Its mine-action staff exchange programme, launched in 2001, provides a means for staff of mine-action programmes to undertake short assignments with other programmes or international mine-action organizations. During the period under review, Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Mozambique, Somalia and Tajikistan were among the countries that participated in the exchange programme (objective 3.7).

26. UNDP national capacity-building efforts are based on its ability to encourage national ownership and sustainability of mine-action programmes. An integral part of that effort is a UNDP programme that trains senior- and mid-level national mine-action staff in effective management practices. During the period under review, UNDP organized one senior-level management course with representatives from 18 mine-affected countries and a series of middle-level management courses with representatives from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen.

27. Landmine impact surveys have been completed in Cambodia, Chad, Mozambique, Thailand and Yemen. Surveys are under way or set to begin in Afghanistan, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Somalia and the Sudan. UNMAS provides, through UNOPS, quality assurance monitors to ensure that the process meets international standards and

UNDP helps national authorities develop plans based on priorities identified through the surveys. The United Nations expects to reach its objective of completing 15 surveys by the end of the strategy period (objective 3.3).

28. UNICEF coordinates and implements its mine-action strategy and provides policy advice and programmatic guidance, through its Landmines and Small Arms Team within the Office of Emergency Programmes. The Team also engages "flying team" consultants who can be deployed at short notice for brief periods to assist with national and local capacity-building and emergency response. UNICEF continued to implement and support mine-risk education and other mine-accident prevention activities, advocacy and survivor assistance in 28 countries and areas. When appropriate, UNICEF locates its operations within or offers space in its own premises to other United Nations mine-action entities. UNICEF has assigned its mine-risk education officers to work inside mine-action centres in, for example, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Sudan. In Burundi, Georgia, Guatemala, Mauritania, Nicaragua, Panama, the Russian Federation (Chechnya), the Syrian Arab Republic (Golan Heights) and Viet Nam, UNICEF alone among United Nations entities undertakes mine-action initiatives.

29. UNICEF's mine-action strategy, completed in 2002, outlines the principles, goals and objectives that guide initiatives in areas such as mine-risk education, advocacy, victim assistance capacity-building and its commitment to a rights-based approach to mine action. In Afghanistan, UNICEF supported efforts of the national mine-action team to develop a five-year mine-risk education strategy. In Cambodia, UNICEF worked with national mine-action authorities and relevant ministries to support the development of mine-risk education and victim assistance strategies.

30. In July 2003, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA) agreed to develop guidelines for the integration of a gender perspective into mine-action programmes. Consultations with field- and headquarters-based United Nations mine-action staff have begun to define more clearly the methodology for developing and implementing the guidelines (objective 3.8). In February 2003 the IACG-MA principals endorsed a United Nations victim assistance policy entitled "The scope of action of mine-action centres and organizations in victim assistance" (objective 3.9).

Strategic goal four. Mine-action operations are implemented in a safe and cost-effective manner.

31. The principals of IACG-MA endorsed a new series of International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) on the use of mine-detecting dogs in December 2002. In March 2003, an updated second edition of IMAS was published and a new CD-ROM was distributed. At meetings of the IMAS Review Board in January 2003 and the Steering Group in May 2003, participants called for a more structured process to review the standards, as well as an assessment to determine the extent to which IMAS are incorporated into national standards and to identify provisions that may be causing difficulties in the field. On 15 July 2003, the IACG-MA principals endorsed the revised terms of reference for the Steering Group and Review Board and the amended procedure for the production of new IMAS. UNICEF developed draft mine-risk education and related standards and GICHD continues to work on the production of a standard to guide mechanical assistance in mine action

(objectives 4.1 and 4.2). In Croatia, one of the primary efforts of UNDP has been assisting the Croatian Mine-Action Centre to develop national standards within the IMAS framework. UNDP has been undertaking similar initiatives in Eritrea, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Yemen, while UNICEF has also been involved in the processes, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Eritrea and Ethiopia and Sri Lanka (objective 4.3).

32. After the release of the IMAS, UNOPS modified all of its mine-action contract models and statements of work to ensure that contractors engaged by the United Nations work in accordance with the IMAS and relevant national standards. UNOPS has provided donors, through the Mine-Action Support Group, a list of recommended contract clauses for use in bilateral agreements between donors and mine-action organizations. The clauses require contractors to work in accordance with IMAS and under the coordination of the mine-action centre, whether it is managed nationally or by the United Nations, to ensure safety, promote efficiency and prevent duplication (objective 4.6).

33. To share experience, identify and disseminate lessons learned and promote best practices in mine-risk education, UNICEF continued to work with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines to convene the Mine-Risk Education Working Group, which is a forum for practitioners. The Working Group also participated in the development of the mine-risk education component of IMAS. UNICEF and the Centers for Disease Control of the United States began to develop a training programme to relate public health tools to mine action and thus better identify the incidence and prevalence of mine and UXO accidents and more effectively target resources. UNICEF commissioned a study of lessons learned in its global mine-action activities for the period 1993-2003 (objectives 4.2 and 4.5).

34. UNDP conducted an external evaluation of the mine-action programme of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and external evaluations in Eritrea, Ethiopia and Lebanon are planned for 2003-2004 (objective 4.4). UNMAS has entered into partnership with James Madison University in the United States (see para. 7 above) to expand and update a database containing examples of best practices and lessons learned in mine action that will be made available through E-Mine (at www.mineaction.org) in December 2003 (objective 4.5).

35. An integral part of establishing an effective national mine-action programme is to develop a legal framework within which to conduct mine-action operations. In its support role to national Governments, UNDP, in partnership with GICHD, has undertaken a study to examine the legal foundations of national mine-action programmes. The study assembled examples of mine-action legislation enacted by Governments, collected case studies, identified common themes and reviewed national structures in mine-affected countries. In 2004, UNDP plans to share the results of the study with mine-affected countries through a series of regional workshops (objective 4.7).

Strategic goal five. Adequate resources for mine action are mobilized and their use is effectively coordinated.

36. Belgium and Germany chaired the Mine-Action Support Group in 2002 and 2003 respectively. The Support Group facilitated regular discussions between the United Nations and donors, for whom a visit to mine-action programmes in the

Balkans was organized for donor representatives in March 2003 (objectives 5.1 and 5.3). The States parties to the Mine Ban Convention have established the Geneva-based Resource Mobilization Contact Group, which received briefings in May from the United Nations and the World Bank on sources of multilateral funding.

37. IACG-MA is the main mine-action coordinating body in the United Nations. At the working level, it meets monthly under the chairmanship of the director of UNMAS. At the principals' level, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations chairs meetings as required. In December 2002, IACG-MA, at the principals level, endorsed the operational framework for rapid response as a working document and discussed the relationships among United Nations entities and NGOs in the field. In July 2003, IACG-MA, also at the principals' level, endorsed the revised United Nations mine-action strategy for the period 2001-2005 and welcomed the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues as new members. At the working level, IACG-MA reviewed the situation in mine-affected countries, heard reports on assessment missions, monitored progress in the implementation of the United Nations mine-action strategy for the period 2001-2005 and discussed the new victim assistance policy, the Mine-Action Guidelines for Ceasefire and Peace Agreements and the issue of gender in mine action. The Steering Committee on Mine Action comprises the members of IACG-MA, representatives of GICHD, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, the International Committee of the Red Cross and a number of other NGOs. The Steering Committee met in September 2002 and February and May 2003 and discussed mine and UXO situations in Eritrea, the Russian Federation (Chechnya), the Sudan and Viet Nam. Among other things, the group formed an ad hoc task force to address the relationship between the United Nations and mine-action NGOs in the field (objective 5.2).

38. UNMAS manages a mine-action investments database, which tracks donor contributions to projects worldwide. Donors update their own information on the database. As at May 2003, 10 donors had already posted information on the database. A total of 16 posted data in 2002 (objective 5.5).

39. The *Portfolio of Mine-related Projects: 2003* is a tool for resource mobilization that is produced by the United Nations mine-action entities in both print and web-based formats. The portfolio includes United Nations and NGO mine-action projects. In November 2002, for the first time, the portfolio was launched at the same time as the United Nations inter-agency consolidated appeals. The United Nations mine-action entities in collaboration with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, are using the preparation of the portfolio for 2004 as an opportunity to foster coordination and integrated planning (objective 5.4).

40. UNDP mobilized over $67 million for mine action during the reporting period, with more than $15 million channelled through its newly established Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, which enables donors to provide contributions in support of thematic priorities, including mine action. The Trust Fund is an important vehicle for channelling contributions to UNDP mine-action projects in the field and at headquarters. UNDP expects to receive an increasing share of non-core financial contributions through the Trust Fund in the coming year.

41. One of UNDP's most successful public-private partnerships, Adopt-A-Minefield, executed by UNOPS, raised over $3 million in the past year, raising the total since 1998 to $8 million. The programme raises funds for United Nations

mine-clearance operations in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Croatia, Iraq, Mozambique and Viet Nam from tens of thousands of supporters globally, including children, community and corporate leaders, educators and celebrities.

42. In March 2003, UNMAS convened the Sixth International Meeting of Mine Action Programme Directors and Advisors, sponsored by GICHD. Participants discussed strategic planning; priority setting; integration of mine action into peacekeeping, humanitarian and development programming and budgeting; emerging policy issues; recent developments in mine-action tools and technology; and field coordination among Governments, the United Nations and NGOs. On the final day, 17 representatives of 11 major donor countries joined the programme directors and United Nations staff to discuss field-based resource coordination; integration of mine action into development programmes and budgets; donor funding strategies; and programme-funding needs (objective 5.7).

43. A number of regional organizations, including the Southern African Development Community, have taken initiatives to promote coordination of mine action at the regional level. Meanwhile, the Organization of American States has continued its programmes of support to mine action in Latin America. A number of national directors of programmes in the Balkans have also come together to form the South-East Europe Mine Action Centre. The United Nations encourages and supports such cooperation.

Strategic goal six. International instruments that address the mine/unexploded ordnance problem are universalized.

44. Significant progress has been made towards achieving a world free from the threat of landmines. The number of new mine victims is decreasing, stockpiles are being destroyed, mined areas are being cleared and the production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines have all but stopped. Eight countries have joined the Mine Ban Convention since 2002, bringing the total number of States parties to 134. Representatives of UNMAS, the Department of Disarmament Affairs, UNICEF and UNDP have made presentations to promote a better understanding of the Convention at meetings in Angers (France), Brazzaville, Brussels, Dubrovnik (Croatia), Lima, Moscow and Yerevan and conferences in Kobe (Japan) and London (objective 6.1).

45. UNDP assisted the Governments of Chad, Uganda and Ukraine to destroy their stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines in compliance with their obligations under the Mine Ban Convention.

46. In its resolution 56/219 of 21 December 2001, the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General to study ways and means of increasing public awareness of the impact of the problem of landmines and other unexploded ordnance on affected countries and to present options to that effect. IACG-MA is preparing a United Nations mine-action advocacy strategy that will address preventive and remedial aspects. An interactive CD-ROM, entitled "Landmines: The World Takes Action", was launched at the Fourth Meeting of States Parties, held in Geneva in September 2002, and subsequently distributed to a broad audience. UNMAS also compiled a CD-ROM of all official mine-related United Nations documents for the period 1993-2002 and distributed it at the May 2003 session of the standing committees of the Mine Ban Convention.

47. UNMAS continued to provide substantive support to the Group of Governmental Experts of States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions and Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, the meetings of which were all attended by mine-action field experts. At a meeting in March 2003, UNMAS made a presentation on the impact of mines other than anti-personnel mines on clearance operations in Afghanistan. In addition, at the request of the Coordinator of the Group of Governmental Experts, UNMAS, in collaboration with GICHD and the Swiss Army, organized a demonstration of demining techniques to illustrate the challenges involved in mine detection. UNMAS also prepared a paper on the role of the United Nations in providing assistance to countries affected by explosive remnants of war. It highlights the funding mechanisms available through the United Nations system for dealing with explosive remnants of war, the United Nations role in assisting victims and the relevant databases available in E-Mine.

48. The Secretary-General and senior officials continued to stress to heads of State and Government the importance of adhering to and implementing the Mine Ban Convention and Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, at the fourth anniversary of the entry into force of the Mine Ban Convention, briefed the press on the status of its implementation. UNDP resident representatives also promoted the legal instruments in regular discussions with host Governments (objective 6.4). UNICEF developed a guide on the rights of children in the framework of the Mine Ban Convention and an advocacy kit to promote its universalization (objectives 6.1 and 6.2).

49. United Nations entities have reported regularly to the Standing Committees of the Mine Ban Convention and participated in contact groups on universalization, on article 7 of the Convention and on resource mobilization. At the request of the co-chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance, UNMAS supported a consultative process to identify priority areas for work in the period leading up to the review conference.

50. In June 2003, UNMAS and UNICEF participated in the second session of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities. The goal was to support the development of instruments of international law. UNMAS is working with United Nations and NGO partners to ensure that the rights of landmine survivors are on the agenda of the Ad Hoc Committee and are addressed in the text of an eventual convention.

51. Through its presence in some 80 countries, the International Committee of the Red Cross focuses its mine-related efforts on victim assistance, education and advocacy. It engages in humanitarian diplomacy with national and regional authorities with a view to encouraging States to adhere to and fully implement the Mine Ban Convention. It also assists States in the development of national implementing legislation and raises awareness about mine ban norms in disseminating humanitarian law to armed forces and armed groups.

52. UNMAS has supported the work of Geneva Call to encourage armed non-State actors to uphold the principles of the Mine Ban Convention. Some non-State actors use and produce anti-personnel mines and are in de facto control of mine-affected areas. UNMAS also supported activities of the International Campaign to Ban

Landmines by funding the global meeting of Landmine Monitor researchers in April 2003.

IV. Financial aspects

53. In his report of 24 September 2002 on assistance in mine action (A/57/430), the Secretary-General indicated that UNMAS was on sounder footing. More specifically, he reported that two additional posts for UNMAS had been established under an account to support peacekeeping operations (a planning officer at the P-4 level and a programme officer at the P-3 level). Recruitment to those posts has been completed.

54. In keeping with his conviction that mine action is a core responsibility of the United Nations, the Secretary-General included two posts in UNMAS to be funded from the regular budget for the biennium 2004-2005. Those posts, a policy coordination officer at the P-4 level and a threat-monitoring officer at the P-3 level, are responsible for the collection and analysis of information on the mine situation around the world.

55. With those arrangements in place and the continued generous support of donors to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, the Secretary-General is confident that UNMAS will be in a position to carry out its programme of work in the immediate future.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

56. The formal review in early 2003 of the United Nations mine-action strategy for the period 2001-2005 confirmed several important observations. Firstly, the strategy has provided valuable direction and guidance for all United Nations entities involved in its implementation and has fostered coordination and accountability across the mine-action community. Secondly, the strategy review process revealed a considerable degree of consensus among United Nations partners on a set of fundamental principles that underpin their common endeavours, including the commitment to integrate a development perspective into mine-action planning, to emphasize the role of mine-affected communities when determining mine-action priorities and to address gender concerns in the design, implementation and evaluation of mine-action programmes. Thirdly, the review offered an opportunity to review, modify and clarify a number of strategic objectives in the light of practical experience.

57. Mine action has been more systematically integrated into humanitarian and development planning and operations over the past year, at the national and also the international levels. The presence of mines and UXO often poses serious constraints to development. Although donors continue to fund mine action primarily from humanitarian or emergency budget lines, there is increasing recognition of the importance of supporting mine action from development and reconstruction budgets as well. This is particularly important in the area of victim assistance, for example, a long-term concern for which funds are almost always inadequate.

58. In the humanitarian context, it is fully accepted that mine action must form an integral part of the consolidated appeals process. At the country level, United

Nations resident and humanitarian coordinators are including senior mine-action staff in the United Nations country team and taking on responsibility for directing the process of determining mine-action priorities. The newly developed United Nations mine-action rapid response capacity proved essential in Iraq, where the United Nations was able to deploy a mine action coordination team and important operational assets for emergency assessments and disposal of explosive ordnance with unprecedented speed.

59. Mine-action requirements are considered increasingly at the early stages of planning of peacekeeping missions and are included in mission structures as appropriate. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, at its fifty-seventh session, encouraged troop-contributing countries to carry out demining operations in conformity with IMAS, to make use of IMSMA and to consider participating in the framework of rapid response in appropriate situations (A/57/767, paras. 143-147).

60. The following recommendations and proposals for action derive from those conclusions:

(a) The Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action should continuously monitor implementation of the United Nations mine-action strategy for the period 2001-2005 and report annually to the General Assembly on progress made and challenges encountered;

(b) A United Nations mine-action strategy for the period 2005-2009 should be developed in 2005;

(c) In countries emerging from conflict, the Government, together with donors, should carry out assessments of the impact of mines and UXO on recovery and development at the earliest practical moment;

(d) In countries where mines and UXO have constrained development activities, donors should support mine action from development budgets as well as from dedicated humanitarian budget lines;

(e) Governments and United Nations entities should consider requesting UNMAS to activate the mine-action rapid response plan in humanitarian emergencies or when political developments allow a mine and UXO problem to be tackled for the first time;

(f) Countries contributing troops to peacekeeping operations with expertise in explosive ordnance disposal and mine clearance should ensure that operations are conducted in accordance with IMAS.

61. The Secretary-General warmly welcomes the evident shift in the perception of mine action from an isolated and specialist task to an integral part of mainstream humanitarian, development and peacekeeping operations and he encourages all stakeholders — including mine-affected States, donor Governments and organizations, as well as civil society — to continue to work together to eliminate the threat that landmines pose to the daily life and future aspirations of communities around the world.